

South Africa Is Waging Extensive Publicity Drive

By Walter Pincus

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In 1975 and 1976, Lester Kinsolving, Episcopal minister, columnist, White House press corps gadfly and local radio commentator, got over \$2,500 worth of corporate stocks from a lawyer-lobbyist working for the South African Information Department.

"I looked on it as a lecture fee," Kinsolving said recently, adding that he sold the stocks shortly after receiving them.

The stocks, as few as one or two shares in a single company but usually up to \$200 worth ("my old lecture fee," Kinsolving said), were purchased for him by Donald deKleffer, a partner in the Washington-law firm of

Collier, Shannon, Rill & Edwards as part of the firm's representation of its South African government client.

The shares and expense money paid by the law firm and charged to the South Africans permitted Kinsolving to appear at annual meetings of five companies in 1975 and eight last year.

The clergyman-journalist, who normally appears in clerical garb, said he was never asked by the law firm to speak at the meetings. He would speak only to counterattack anti-apartheid church groups who attended the stockholder gatherings, Kinsolving said.

South African lobbyist deKleffer's use of Kinsolving is only one example

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of the increasing and sophisticated public relations campaign being carried on in the United States by South Africa's governmental and private institutions.

Subsidized trips for journalists, books and pamphlets, and wide distribution of pro-South Africa publication-ready news stories, radio programs, television films and even high school teaching kits are part of the growing propaganda campaign.

"The anti-South Africa lobbies have stepped up their programs considerably," Carl F. Noffke, head of the South African Information Services in Washington, said recently during an interview. "We don't react negatively," he added. "We present an objective picture on South Africa."

The official information service, according to Noffke, has three offices in this country (the New York and Los Angeles branches spend over \$700,000 a year), and 11 attaches who travel the country speaking publicly and making contact with reporters.

The most rewarding public relations employed by Noffke's organization—and at least two private South African groups—is to provide subsidized trips to South Africa to American journalists.

Last year, for example, the government information service paid the round trip transportation to and from South Africa for at least 12 American journalists, according to Noffke, plus their expenses while in South Africa. Such a package is worth several thousand dollars.

The trips are effective, Noffke explained, because most visiting journalists know of South Africa only "through selective reports that portray it as the outcast of the world. Whatever they see has to be impressive."

In 1974 the South African effort in Washington was further enhanced when the information service retained deKleffer's law firm for Capitol Hill lobbying and some limited media work. Hired at a \$50-an-hour rate, the firm gets roughly \$40,000 annually.

Last year, "in order to improve our informational apparatus," according to Noffke, the Pretoria government also hired Sydney S. Baron Co., a high-powered New York public relations firm.

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Baron, given a 12-month fee of \$365,000, brought some new players to the South African team. His chief account executive is Andrew Hatcher, best known as the first black White House assistant press secretary during the Kennedy administration.

Hatcher, who describes his work on behalf of the South Africans as "a challenging assignment," said during a recent interview that a basic effort is being directed at small dailies and weeklies, particularly those serving black leaders. "We know if we get enough [of them] to examine the South African situation, we can make

a case for negotiated settlement of grievances," Hatcher said.

One technique Hatcher is using consists of sending feature stories on South Africa written by the Baron firm to daily and weekly papers "in certain areas where understanding of South Africa is easily aroused."

"Four Million Blacks in School Before Civil Unrest" was one story sent out in a recent Baron mailing. "South Africa Plans Multi-Racial Sports" headlined another.

Consulting on the South African account, as well as others handled by the Baron firm, are two retired New York Times officials—Nathan W. Goldstein, former circulation director, and Irvin S. Taubkin, who was the Times' public relations director when he retired in 1970.

"We maintain some media contacts for them," Taubkin said recently, but would not specify what they were.

The South African Foundation, a two-man, Washington-based, \$100,000-a-year privately financed lobbying and public relations operation, also sponsors journalists, academics, clergymen and others on trips to South Africa.

Last year, for example, William Rusher, conservative syndicated columnist and publisher of The National Review, was one of four subsidized foundation visitors in a six-month period. Two Roman Catholic priests and a contributing editor of Fortune magazine were the other three.

Rusher said the October, 1976, week-long visit was not his first trip to South Africa. He had been there initially in 1962 at the expense of the government's information service. Since that time he had also made several trips at his own expense.

Rusher agreed to travel to South Africa under the foundation's auspices—as part of a world tour—because it offered an opportunity to talk to business interests there.

In his first newspaper column written from Cape Town, Rusher wrote that he was traveling "at the expense" of the South African Foundation. His syndicate, Universal Press, also informed editors by special notice that Rusher was in South Africa "at the invitation and expense" of the foundation.

South African Information Services official Noffke said he resents what he recently described as the attitude among some American reporters that these subsidized trips are "junkets."

"The U.S. government pays for similar trips by foreigners to visit this country," he said recently, "and no one says they are corrupting."

Though Noffke said "we ensure visitors meet with all sections" of the population, including the opposition, a recent visitor on a non-journalist subsidized trip said she had to sneak off from the tour to reach the real opponents of the government.

The subsidized trips serve a second purpose for the donors. They establish contacts for future use. Kinsolving is just such an example.

The clergyman-journalist took a

subsidized trip in February, 1975, after he had "exposed" an alleged refugee from apartheid. "The record showed he left South Africa with a passport," Kinsolving said in recalling the incident, and the South African embassy offered him a trip shortly after.

After a 10-day visit, he returned and wrote an attack on an anti-South African church group which Kinsolving said had misrepresented the political prisoner situation. In his article, Kinsolving disclosed that his visit to South Africa had been at the government's expense.

It was after his return to Washington that deKieffer first approached Kinsolving with his proposal for attending corporate meetings.

The South Africans have also expanded their approach to the U.S. radio and television market. They have hired the Broadcasting Foundation of America at \$1,500 a month and Sterling International for \$100,000 last year to distribute radio and television documentaries.

Bernard Beame, son of the New York City mayor and a film producer, signed two contracts last September to do documentaries on the uprising in South Africa and the Transkei—the so-called newly independent black nation carved from South Africa. Beame was not available for comment.